The Filipinos are one people just as much as the Americans. I have no patience with those unkind critics who for sinister purposes lay emphasis on the number of tribes and on the *mestizo* element of mixed blood, with the idea in view of proving lack of solidarity and of taking from the Filipinos the credit which is their due. Let me repeat that regional differences exist, but not to the extent of depriving the people of national unity. As for the *mestizos,* while they have invigorated the population, they are nevertheless Filipinos. Alien blood has been transfused to Filipino veins, but the Filipinos have remained essentially Filipinos and have withstood foreign assimilation. Let me also repeat that the Filipinos are primarily of Malay extraction, and are a blended race distinct from all others. The Filipinos are a homogeneous people. The Filipinos are a nation.

THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

The Filipino social system is, generally speaking, composed of three classes—the *tao*$_y$ the rural laborer of the islands, the small landowner, and the *cacique* or *ilustr&do,* the aristocrat. The *taos* are peasants who are willing workers in the fields. They are often oppressed by their employers and have been much preyed upon by usurers. With all, the *taos* appear content with their lot although increasing unrest is noticeable in some localities. Above the *taos* is the middle class, which, as in most countries, is the happiest. The *cacique* is a person of influence or a large landowner who frequently exercises his power arbitrarily. Rizal

in his novel *Noli Me Tangere* ("The Social Cancer") drew a dark picture of the round of life and character of the *cacique* of his day, and such individuals are still to be found. The *ilustrados* are sometimes the scions of the Spanish *mestizos.* Having an admixture of foreign blood, they are inclined to look down upon their dark-skinned brothers, and in turn the full-